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(71)Applicant : SEIKO EPSON CORP

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(72)Inventor: MIYAZAWA HISASHI

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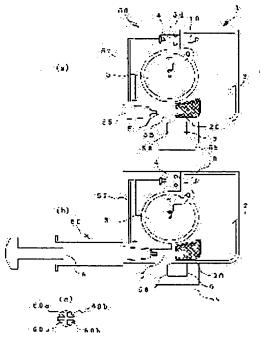
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(54) INK SUPPLY MECHANISM FOR INK JET RECORDER, AND INK- INJECTING TOOL FIT FOR THE SAME

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To provide an ink supply mechanism for supplying ink while maintaining a negative pressure fit for recording without requiring a porous material or the like.

SOLUTION: There are provided an ink chamber 2, an ink cartridge, a recessed part 54, a through hole 55, and a connecting unit 50. The ink cartridge includes a connection port 4 for communicating with the atmosphere to maintain a valve shut state at all times to the ink chamber 2, a connection port 5 for injecting the ink, an ink outlet 6 which communicates with the ink chamber 2 and with a recording head 59, and a negative pressure generation mechanism 3 for discharging the ink of the ink chamber 2 to the ink outlet 6 while maintaining a predetermined negative pressure state. The recessed part 54 becomes a connecting part by opening the connection port 4 to let the connection port communicate with the atmosphere via a capillary 57, and the through hole 55 which houses the connection port 5



in a state while the connection port is shut opens the connection port 5 when a syringe 60 is inserted. The connecting unit 50 supplies the ink to the recording head 59 by connecting to the ink outlet 6.

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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] An ink room, and the end connection for an air free passage which is open for free passage in the aforementioned ink room, and maintains a normally closed valve state and the end connection for ink pouring. The ink cartridge which the ink tap hole which is open for free passage in the aforementioned ink room, and is open for free passage to a recording head was formed, and was equipped with the negative pressure developmental mechanics which discharges the ink of the aforementioned ink room to the aforementioned ink tap hole, maintaining a predetermined negative pressure state. The connection which makes the aforementioned end connection for an air free passage open, and makes the atmosphere open for free passage through a capillary. The breakthrough which it holds [breakthrough] in the state where the aforementioned end connection for ink pouring was made to close, and makes the aforementioned end connection for ink pouring open by insertion of the liquid pouring means from the outside, and the connection unit which connects with the aforementioned ink tap hole and supplies ink to a recording head, ** — a shell — the ink feeder style for ink—jet recording — devices

[Claim 2] The ink pouring implement which consists of a point equipped with the liquid flow channel which is inserted in this soma in which the pressurization of liquid and reduced pressure are possible, and the end connection for ink pouring of an ink cartridge in airtight, presses the valve of the aforementioned end connection for ink pouring, and is made to open, and is open for free passage to this aforementioned soma.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[The technical field to which invention belongs] this invention relates to the ink feeder style for ink-jet recording devices which supplies ink to the recording head which carries out the regurgitation of the ink drop corresponding to a printing signal in the state of proper negative pressure.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] An ink-jet recording device carries the ink-jet recording head which usually carries out the regurgitation of the ink drop to the carriage which reciprocates in the direction of paper width of a record form corresponding to a printing signal, and it is constituted so that ink may be supplied to a recording head from an external ink tank. If they are carried in carriage removable if ink storage containers, such as such an ink tank, are in a small recording device, and they are in a large-sized recording device, they are installed in a box and connected to the recording head through the ink supply tube.

[0003] ink according [the ink tank carried in carriage] to reciprocation of carriage — choppy — etc. — in order to decrease the pressure variation to depend as much as possible, usually, porosity material, such as sponge, is held, ink is infiltrated into this, and it is constituted [0004] Moreover, when receiving supply of ink from the mass ink bag installed in the box through an ink supply tube, in order to prevent change of ink ** resulting from crookedness of the tube by reciprocation of carriage, it is constituted so that ink may be supplied to a recording head through the sub tank equipped with the dumping function for preventing change of ink ** by movement of carriage.

[0005]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] For this reason, only the part which holds porosity material if it is in the former has the problem that the mechanism in which the pressure variation of the ink by rocking is prevented is needed if there is a problem of becoming large as compared with the size and the amount of ink which can hold a weight again of an ink tank and it is in the latter, and structure is complicated. The place which this invention is made in view of such a problem, and is made into the purpose is offering the ink feeder style for ink-jet recording devices which can maintain the negative pressure state which was concerned with movement of carriage and was [that there is nothing] suitable for printing, and can supply the ink of an ink cartridge to a recording head. Moreover, other purposes of this invention are offering the ink pouring implement suitable for the ink feeder style same as the above.

[0006]

[Means for Solving the Problem] In order to solve such a technical problem, it sets to this invention. An ink room, and the end connection for an air free passage which maintains a normally closed valve state in the aforementioned ink room and the end connection for ink pouring, The ink cartridge which the ink tap hole which is open for free passage in the aforementioned ink room, and is open for free passage to a recording head was formed, and was equipped with the negative pressure developmental mechanics which discharges the ink of the aforementioned ink room to the aforementioned ink tap hole, maintaining a predetermined

negative pressure state, The connection which makes the aforementioned end connection for an air free passage open, and makes the atmosphere open for free passage through a capillary, It had the breakthrough which it holds [breakthrough] in the state where the aforementioned end connection for ink pouring was made to close, and makes the aforementioned end connection for ink pouring open by insertion of the liquid pouring means from the outside, and the connection unit which connects with the aforementioned ink tap hole and supplies ink to a recording head. [0007]

[Function] In the state where the ink cartridge is removed from connecting means, an ink room is maintained by the seal state by the valve element, and disclosure of ink and vaporization of an ink solvent are prevented. Moreover, where connecting means are equipped, the ink of an ink room is supplied to a recording head, a valve element opening, and an ink room being opened for free passage by the atmosphere, and maintaining fixed negative pressure. Moreover, when the ink of an ink room is consumed, exchange ink cartridges, or insert liquid pouring meanses, such as a syringe, in an ink inlet, the end connection for ink pouring is made to open compulsorily, and ink is supplied to an ink room.

[8000]

[Embodiments of the Invention] Then, based on the example illustrating the detail of this invention, it explains below. Drawing 1 or drawing 3 is what shows one example of the ink cartridge of this invention, respectively, an ink cartridge 1 The negative pressure generating section 3 which the ink room 2 prolonged in the vertical direction in an unilateral mentions later to the side else again is formed, in the upper part of the ink room 2, and the lower part, each The end connection 4 for an air free passage which consists of a tube-like object which makes connection with the exterior, The end connection 5 for ink pouring is formed, and the ink tap hole 6 which supplies ink to a recording head is formed in the bottom.

[0009] The apertures 4a and 5a for a free passage are formed in the peripheral surface at each end connections 4 and 5, and valve elements 10 and 20 are held in the interior possible [movement to shaft orientations]. In the state of valve closing, the packing 13 and 23 which consists of an elastic body which closes end connections 4 and 5 and the openings 12 and 22 open for free passage is fitted in each valve elements 10 and 20, and they are inserted in the other end side of the slide shafts 11 and 21 with which Ends 11a and 21a project from end connections 4 and 5 at end connections 4 and 5 so that openings 12 and 22 may be made to **** packing 13 and 23 with springs 14 and 24.

[0010] If the connection unit 50 which an ink cartridge 1 mentions later is equipped by such composition, the end connection 4 for an air free passage maintains a valve-opening state, and the end connection 5 for ink pouring will open it, when an ink pouring implement is inserted, while maintaining the valve-closing state.

[0011] the cross section which is open for free passage with the ink room 2 as the negative pressure generating section 3 was shown in <u>drawing 3</u> — the passage formation which served as the fastener which fixes the periphery of **** 31 and **** 31 to the valve chest 30 which consists of a circular crevice — a member 32 is held, and the film 33 and 33' which equipped the field including the ink room 2 with ***** are stuck, and it is constituted The breakthrough 35 is formed in the position where heights 34 counter the center of the valve chest 30 with heights 34 again at **** 31.

[0012] Drawing 4 (a) and (b) are drawings in which dividing into the front reverse side the ink passage formed in the negative pressure generating section 3, respectively, and showing it. Flow ** which flows into a filter 36 from the ink room 2 and which flows and flows into the throughhole 39 of the valve chest 30 via passage 38 from ** and a throughhole 37, the passage 45 which connects the throughhole 44 which goes via the passage 43 which passes **** 31, and which it flows and connects **, and the throughholes 40 and 41 and throughholes 41 and 42 of the valve chest 30, and which flows and is open for free passage to ** and the ink tap hole 6, and a throughhole 42 is flowed -- it flows, and it is alike with ** and is open for free passage In addition, the sign 46 in drawing 3 shows packing inserted in the ink tap hole 6.

[0013] <u>Drawing 5</u> shows the cross-section structure of the negative pressure generating section 3, **** 31 is formed as a diaphram which uses the circumference as a heavy-gage part, and the

breakthrough 35 is ****(ed) by heights 34 with the spring 47. It is set as the grade which the pressure of the ink to a recording head maintains negative pressure, and the suppression force follows this spring 47 at record operation, and can supply ink.

[0014] <u>Drawing 6</u> shows one example of the connection unit 50, and the crevice 54 and breakthrough 55 which hold the end connection 4 for an air free passage, the end connection 5 for ink pouring, and the ink tap hole 6 of an ink cartridge in the main part 53 equipped with the walls 51 and 52 which are in agreement with the configuration of the front face and base of an ink cartridge, and the crevice 56 are formed, respectively.

[0015] the crevice 54 which engages with the end connection 4 for an air free passage is wide opened to the atmosphere through the capillary 57 formed on the surface of the main part — having — **** — the interior — an air free passage — wall 54a which presses the valve element of a hole is formed The breakthrough 55 which holds the end connection for ink pouring is not equipped with the wall which contacts the valve element of an ink cartridge, but maintains a valve—closing state. The crevice 56 linked to the ink tap hole 6 is opened for free passage by the recording head 59 through the run through—hole 58.

[0016] In such composition, as shown in <u>drawing 7</u>, the ink tap hole 6 is positioned for the ink cartridge with which ink was filled up to a crevice 56, the upper part is moved to a connection unit position, and it connects with the connection unit 50. In addition, since the ink of the ink room 2 does not begin to leak from the ink tap hole 6 since **** 31 is maintaining the valve-closing state and the valve element 10 of the end connection 4 for an air free passage is maintaining the valve-closing state until the connection unit 50 is equipped with an ink cartridge, the ink of the ink room 2 does not evaporate.

[0017] In the state where it connected, it is pushed on a wall, and the slide shaft of the air end connection of an ink cartridge 1 resists a spring, retreats, and opens. Thereby, the ink room 2 is open for free passage to the atmosphere through a capillary 57. Moreover, the valve element 20 of the end connection 5 for ink pouring maintains a valve-closing state, and prevents disclosure of ink, and atmospheric penetration.

[0018] If a recording head 59 is closed by the capping means and negative pressure is made to act on a recording head 59, since the ink tap hole 6 will serve as strong negative pressure, **** 31 opens, the ink of the ink room 2 flows into a recording head 59, and ink is filled up with this state into a recording head 59.

[0019] If ink is consumed by the recording head 59 and the negative pressure of the ink tap hole 6 becomes large, since the differential pressure of the front reverse side of **** 31 will become large on the other hand, **** 31 which received the pressure of the ink of the ink room 2 resists the energization force of a spring 47, and separates from heights 34. The breakthrough 35 of **** 31 is opened wide by this, a through-hole 39 and a through-hole 42 are open for free passage, and ink flows into the ink tap hole 6. If ink flows into a recording head and the negative pressure of the ink tap hole 6 becomes small, **** 31 will be forced on heights 34 by the energization force of a spring 47, and a breakthrough 35 will be closed by heights 34. **** 31 repeats attachment and detachment with heights 34 so that the ink pressure of the ink tap hole 6 may serve as fixed negative pressure hereafter.

[0020] If a syringe 60 is inserted in a breakthrough 55 when the ink of an ink cartridge 1 was consumed and a supplement of ink is needed, a valve element 20 will be pushed on point 60a of a syringe 60, and will retreat and open. If the piston 61 of a syringe 60 is pressed in this state, the air into which ink flowed into the ink room 2 from opening 60b, and the ink room 2 by ink restoration was compressed will be emitted to the atmosphere through a capillary 57 from the end connection 4 for an air free passage.

[0021] If a syringe 60 is drawn out in the stage which pouring of the ink of the specified quantity ended, a valve element 20 will lose support, and will close the valve according to the energization force of a spring 24, and leakage **** of the ink from the ink room 2 will be prevented.
[0022] In addition, although ink is simply poured in in the above-mentioned example, an ink residue can be correctly judged by managing ink consumption according to the amount of printings by inserting an empty syringe, attracting and discharging the ink of an ink room, and pouring in the ink of the amount of conventions after that.
 [0023] In addition, in an above-

mentioned example, although the end connection 4 for an air free passage and the end connection 5 for ink pouring are arranged in the upper part of the ink room 2, and the lower part, respectively, if the predetermined field of the ink room 2 is made to open each end connection for free passage through a free passage way, end connections 4 and 5 can be prepared for a proper place, without receiving a restraint in an arrangement position. [0024]

[Effect of the Invention] as mentioned above, as explained, according to this invention, in the state where ink supply meanses, such as an ink cartridge, are removed Where the ink room was maintained by the seal state by the valve element, and could prevent disclosure of ink, and vaporization of an ink solvent and a connection unit is equipped with it The ink of an ink room can be supplied to a recording head, a valve element opening, and an ink room being opened for free passage by the atmosphere, and maintaining fixed negative pressure. further When the ink of an ink room is consumed, ink can be supplied to an ink room by exchanging ink cartridges or inserting liquid pouring meanses, such as a syringe, in an ink inlet.

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DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] It is the perspective diagram showing one example of the ink cartridge of this invention.

[Drawing 2] It is the cross section showing one example of an ink cartridge same as the above.

[Drawing 3] It is the assembly decomposition perspective diagram of an ink cartridge same as the above.

[Drawing 4] Drawing (a) and (b) are drawings showing the flow of the ink of the negative pressure generating section of an ink cartridge same as the above, respectively.

[Drawing 5] It is drawing showing the cross-section structure of the negative pressure generating section same as the above, and the flow of ink.

[Drawing 6] Drawing (a) and (b) are the front view and the cross sections showing one example of a ****** connection unit.

[Drawing 7] Drawing (a) Or (c) is drawing showing the state where the connection unit same as the above was equipped with the ink cartridge, respectively, an ink pouring process, and the structure at the nose of cam of a syringe.

[Description of Notations]

- 1 Ink Cartridge
- 2 Ink Room
- 3 Negative Pressure Generating Section
- 4 End Connection for Air Free Passage
- 5 End Connection for Ink Pouring
- 6 Ink Tap Hole
- 10 20 Valve element
- 11 21 Slide shaft
- 13 23 Packing
- 14 24 Spring
- 31 ****
- 50 Connection Unit
- 54 Crevice
- 54a Wall
- 55 Breakthrough
- 56 Crevice
- 57 Capillary
- 58 Run Through-hole
- 59 Recording Head
- 60 Syringe

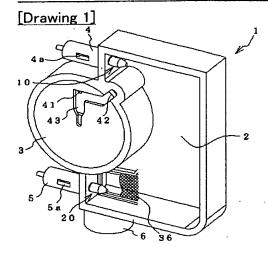
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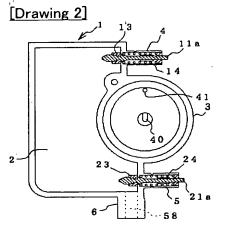
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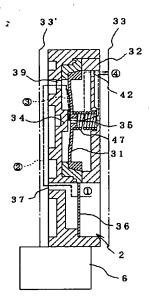
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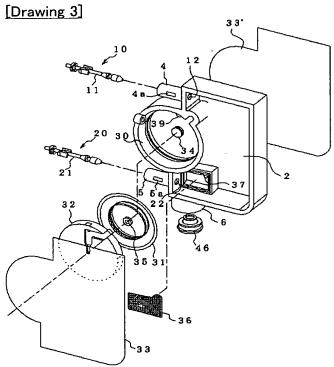
DRAWINGS



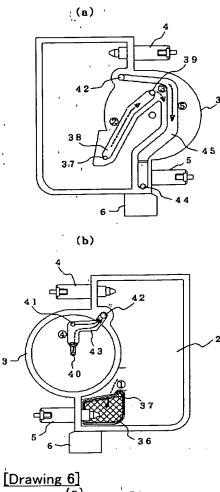


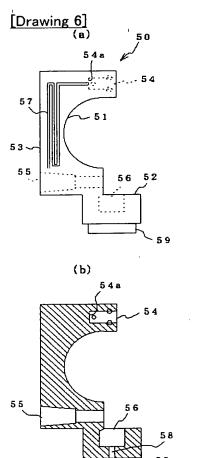
[Drawing 5]

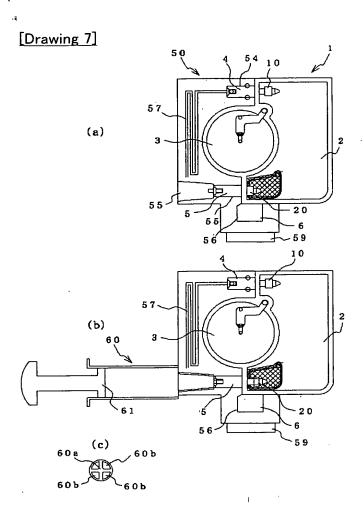




[Drawing 4]







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(33)優先権主張国

日本(JP)

(71)出顧人 000002369

セイコーエブソン株式会社

東京都新宿区西新宿2丁目4番1号

(72)発明者 宮澤 久

長野県諏訪市大和3丁目3番5号 セイコ

ーエプソン株式会社内

(74)代理人 100082566

弁理士 西川 慶治 (外1名)

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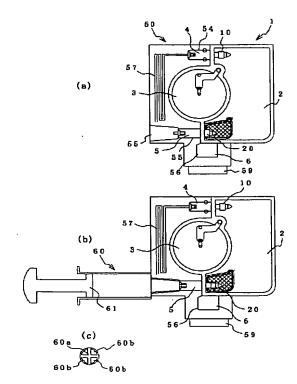
KC27 KD08

(54) 【発明の名称】 インクジェット記録装置用インク供給機構、及びこれに適したインク注入具

(57)【要約】

【課題】 多孔質材等を必要とすることなく、記録に適 した負圧を維持しながらインクを供給するインク供給機 構を提供すること。

【解決手段】 インク室2と、インク室2に常時閉弁状 態を維持する大気連通用接続口4、及びインク注入用接 続口5と、インク室2に連通し記録ヘッド59に連通す るインク流出口6が形成され、インク室2のインクを所 定の負圧状態を維持しつつインク流出口6に排出する負 圧発生機構3を備えたインクカートリッジと、大気連通 用接続口4を開弁させてキャピラリ57を介して大気に 連通させる接続部となる凹部54、インク注入用接続口 5を閉弁させた状態で収容し、かつシリンジ60の挿入 によりインク注入用接続口5を開弁させる貫通孔55、 及びインク流出口6と接続して記録ヘッド59にインク を供給する接続ユニット50を備える。



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【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 インク室と、前記インク室に連通して常時閉弁状態を維持する大気連通用接続口、及びインク注入用接続口と、前記インク室に連通して記録へッドに連通するインク流出口とが形成され、前記インク室のインクを所定の負圧状態を維持しつつ前記インク流出口に排出する負圧発生機構を備えたインクカートリッジと、前記大気連通用接続口を開弁させてキャピラリを介して大気に連通させる接続部、前記インク注入用接続口を閉弁させた状態で収容し、かつ外部からの液注入手段の挿入により前記インク注入用接続して記録へッドにインクを供給する接続ユニットと、

とからなるインクジェット記録装置用インク供給機構。 【請求項2】 液の加圧、及び減圧が可能な本体部と、 インクカートリッジのインク注入用接続口に気密的に挿 入されて前記インク注入用接続口の弁を押圧して開弁さ せ、かつ前記本体部に連通する液流路を備えた先端部と からなるインク注入具。

【発明の詳細な説明】

[0001]

【発明の属する技術分野】本発明は、印刷信号に対応してインク滴を吐出する記録ヘッドにインクを適正な負圧状態で供給するインクジェット記録装置用インク供給機構に関する。

[0002]

【従来の技術】インクジェット記録装置は、通常、記録用紙の紙幅方向に往復動するキャリッジに印刷信号に対応してインク滴を吐出するインクジェット記録ヘッドを搭載して、外部のインクタンクから記録ヘッドにインクを供給するように構成されている。このようなインクタンク等のインク貯蔵容器は、小型の記録装置にあってはキャリッジに着脱可能に搭載され、また大型の記録装置にあっては、函体に設置されてインク供給チューブを介して記録ヘッドに接続されている。

【0003】キャリッジに搭載されるインクタンクは、キャリッジの往復動によるインクの波立ち等による圧力変化を可及的に減少させるため、通常、スポンジ等の多孔質材を収容し、これにインクを含浸させて構成されている。

【0004】また、函体に設置された大容量のインク袋からインク供給チューブを介してインクの供給を受ける場合にも、キャリッジの往復動によるチューブの屈曲に起因するインク圧の変化を防止するため、キャリッジの運動によるインク圧の変化を防止するためのダンピング機能を備えたサブタンクを介して記録ヘッドにインクを供給するように構成されている。

[0005]

【発明が解決しようとする課題】このため、前者にあっては多孔質材を収容する分だけ、インクタンクのサイズ

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や、また重量が収容可能なインク量に比較して大きくなるという問題があり、また後者にあっては、揺動によるインクの圧力変化を防止する機構が必要となり構造が複雑化するという問題がある。本発明は、このような問題に鑑みてなされたものであって、その目的とするところは、キャリッジの移動に関わりなく印刷に適した負圧状態を維持してインクカートリッジのインクを記録ヘッドに供給することができるインクジェット記録装置用のインク供給機構を提供することである。また本発明の他の目的は、同上インク供給機構に適したインク注入具を提供することである。

[0006]

【課題を解決するための手段】このような課題を解決するために本発明においては、インク室と、前記インク室に常時閉弁状態を維持する大気連通用接続口、及びインク注入用接続口と、前記インク室に連通して記録ヘッドに連通するインク流出口とが形成され、前記インク室のインクを所定の負圧状態を維持しつつ前記インク流出口に排出する負圧発生機構を備えたインクカートリッジと、前記大気連通用接続口を開弁させてキャピラリを介して大気に連通させる接続部、前記インク注入用接続口を閉弁させた状態で収容し、かつ外部からの液注入手段の挿入により前記インク注入用接続口を開弁させる貫通孔、及び前記インク流出口と接続して記録ヘッドにインクを供給する接続ユニットと、を備えるようにした。

[0007]

【作用】インクカートリッジは、接続手段から取り外されている状態では、インク室が弁体により密封状態に維持され、インクの漏洩やインク溶媒の揮散が防止される。また接続手段に装着された状態では、弁体が開弁してインク室が大気に連通されて一定の負圧を維持しながらインク室のインクを記録ヘッドに供給する。また、インク室のインクが消費された場合には、インクカートリッジを交換するか、インク注入口にシリンジ等の液注入手段を挿入してインク注入用接続口を強制的に開弁させてインク室にインクを補給する。

[0008]

【発明の実施の形態】そこで以下に本発明の詳細を図示した実施例に基づいて説明する。図1乃至図3は、それぞれ本発明のインクカートリッジの一実施例を示すものであって、インクカートリッジ1は、一側に上下方向に延びるインク室2が、また他側に後述する負圧発生部3が形成され、インク室2の上部、及び下部にはそれぞれ外部との接続を行う筒状体からなる大気連通用接続口4と、インク注入用接続口5が形成され、また最下部には記録ヘッドにインクを供給するインク流出口6が形成されている。

【0009】各接続口4、5には、その周面に連通用の 窓4a、5aが形成されていて、内部に弁体10、20 が軸方向に移動可能に収容されている。各弁体10、2 3

0は、閉弁状態では一端11a、21aが接続口4、5から突出するスライド軸11、21の他端側に、接続口4、5と連通する開口12、22を封止する弾性体からなるパッキン13、23を嵌装され、バネ14、24により開口12、22にパッキン13、23を弾接させるように接続口4、5に挿入されている。

【0010】このような構成により、インクカートリッジ1が後述する接続ユニット50に装着されると、大気連通用接続口4は、開弁状態を維持し、またインク注入用接続口5は閉弁状態を維持する一方、インク注入具が挿入された場合に開弁する。

【0011】負圧発生部3は、図3に示したようにインク室2と連通する断面円形の凹部からなる弁室30に、膜弁31、及び膜升31の外周を固定する固定具を兼ねた流路形成部材32を収容し、インク室2を含む領域に遮気性を備えた膜33、33、を貼付して構成されている。弁室30の中心には凸部34が、また膜弁31には凸部34と対向する位置に貫通孔35が形成されている。

【0012】図4(a)、(b)は、それぞれ負圧発生部3に形成されたインク流路を表裏に分けて示す図であって、インク室2からフィルタ36に流入する流れ①、通孔37から流路38を経由して弁室30の通孔39に流入する流れ②、膜弁31を通過する流れ③、弁室30の通孔40、41と通孔41、42とを結ぶ流路43を経由する流れ④、及びインク流出口6に連通する通孔44と通孔42とを接続する流路45を流れる流れ⑤によりに連通する。なお、図3における符号46は、インク流出口6に嵌め込まれるパッキンを示す。

【0013】図5は、負圧発生部3の断面構造を示すものであって、膜弁31は、周囲を厚肉部とするダイヤフラムとして形成されていて、バネ47により貫通孔35が凸部34に弾接されている。このバネ47は、その弾圧力が、記録ヘッドへのインクの圧力が負圧を維持し、かつ記録動作に追従してインクを供給できる程度に設定されている。

【0014】図6は、接続ユニット50の一実施例を示すものであって、インクカートリッジの前面と底面の形状に一致する壁51、52とを備えた本体53に、インクカートリッジの大気連通用接続口4、インク注入用接続口5、及びインク流出口6を収容する凹部54、貫通孔55、及び凹部56がそれぞれ形成されている。

【0015】大気連通用接続口4に係合する凹部54は、本体の表面に形成されたキャピラリ57を介して大気に開放されており、内部に大気連通孔の弁体を押圧する壁54aが形成されている。インク注入用接続口を収容する貫通孔55は、インクカートリッジの弁体と当接する壁を備えず、閉弁状態を維持させる。インク流出口6に接続する凹部56は、連通孔58を介して記録ヘッド59に連通されている。

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【0016】このような構成において、インクが充填されたインクカートリッジを図7に示したようにインク流出口6を凹部56に位置決めして上部を接続ユニット側に倒し込んで接続ユニット50に接続する。なお、インクカートリッジが接続ユニット50に装着されるまでは、膜弁31が閉弁状態を維持しているので、インク室2のインクがインク流出口6から漏れ出すことがなく、大気連通用接続口4の弁体10が閉弁状態を維持しているので、インク室2のインクが蒸発することもない。

【0017】接続された状態では、インクカートリッジ 1の大気接続口のスライド軸が壁に押されてバネに抗し て後退し、開弁する。これにより、インク室2がキャピ ラリ57を介して大気に連通する。また、インク注入用 接続口5の弁体20は閉弁状態を維持してインクの漏洩 や、大気の進入を阻止する。

【0018】この状態で、記録ヘッド59をキャッピング手段により封止して記録ヘッド59に負圧を作用させると、インク流出口6が強い負圧となるため、膜弁31が開いてインク室2のインクが記録ヘッド59に流れ込み、記録ヘッド59にインクが充填される。

【0019】一方、記録ヘッド59によりインクが消費され、インク流出口6の負圧が大きくなると、膜弁31の表裏の差圧が大きくなるため、インク室2のインクの圧力を受けた膜弁31がバネ47の付勢力に抗して凸部34から離れる。これにより膜弁31の貫通孔35が開放され、通孔39と通孔42が連通し、インク流出口6にインクが流れ込む。記録ヘッドにインクが流れ込んで、インク流出口6の負圧が小さくなると、膜弁31がバネ47の付勢力により凸部34に押し付けられて貫通孔35が凸部34により封止される。以下、インク流出口6のインク圧力が一定の負圧となるように、膜弁31は凸部34との接離を繰返す。

【0020】インクカートリッジ1のインクが消費されてインクの補充が必要になった場合には、貫通孔55にシリンジ60を挿入すると、弁体20がシリンジ60の先端部60aに押されて後退して開弁する。この状態でシリンジ60のピストン61を押圧すると、開口60bからインクがインク室2に流れ込み、またインク充填によるインク室2の圧縮された空気は、大気連通用接続口4からキャピラリ57を経て大気に放出される。

【0021】所定量のインクの注入が終了した段階でシリンジ60を引き抜くと、弁体20が支持を失ってバネ24の付勢力により閉弁し、インク室2からのインクの漏れ出しを防止する。

【0022】なお、上述の実施例では単純にインクを注入しているが、空のシリンジを挿入してインク室のインクを吸引して排出し、その後に規定量のインクを注入することにより、印刷量に合わせてインク消費量を管理することにより、インク残量を正確に判定することができる。

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【0023】なお、上述の実施例においては、大気連通用接続口4とインク注入用接続口5とをそれぞれインク室2の上部、及び下部に配置しているが、それぞれの接続口を連通路を介してインク室2の所定の領域に連通させれば、接続口4、5は配置位置に拘束を受けることなく、適所に設けることができる。

[0024]

【発明の効果】以上、説明したように本発明によれば、インクカートリッジ等のインク供給手段が取り外されている状態では、インク室が弁体により密封状態に維持され、インクの漏洩やインク溶媒の揮散を防止でき、接続ユニットに装着された状態では、弁体が開弁してインク室が大気に連通されて一定の負圧を維持しながらインク室のインクを記録ヘッドに供給することができ、さらには、インク室のインクが消費された場合には、インクカートリッジを交換するか、インク注入口にシリンジ等の液注入手段を挿入することにより、インク室にインクを補給することができる。

【図面の簡単な説明】

【図1】本発明のインクカートリッジの一実施例を示す 斜視図である。

【図2】同上インクカートリッジの一実施例を示す断面図である。

【図3】同上インクカートリッジの組立分解斜視図であ ろ

【図4】図(a)、(b)は、それぞれ同上インクカートリッジの負圧発生部のイングの流れを示す図である。

【図5】同上負圧発生部の断面構造及びインクの流れを

示す図である。

【図6】図(a)、(b)は、ぞれぞれ接続ユニットの一実施例を示す正面図と断面図である。

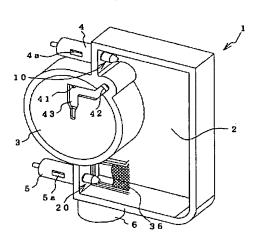
6

【図7】図(a) 乃至(c) は、それぞれ同上接続ユニットにインクカートリッジが装着された状態、インク注入工程、及びシリンジの先端の構造を示す図である。

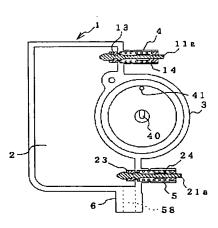
【符号の説明】

- 1 インクカートリッジ
- 2 インク室
- 10 3 負圧発生部
 - 4 大気連通用接続口
 - 5 インク注入用接続口
 - 6 インク流出口
 - 1.0、20 弁体
 - 11、21 スライド軸
 - 13、23 パッキン
 - 14、24 バネ
 - 31 膜弁
 - 50 接続ユニット
 - 0 54 凹部
 - 54a 壁
 - 55 貫通孔
 - 56 凹部
 - 57 キャピラリ
 - 58 連通孔
 - 59 記録ヘッド
 - 60 シリンジ

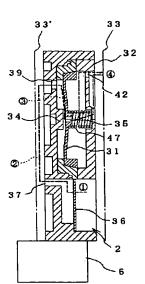
[図1]



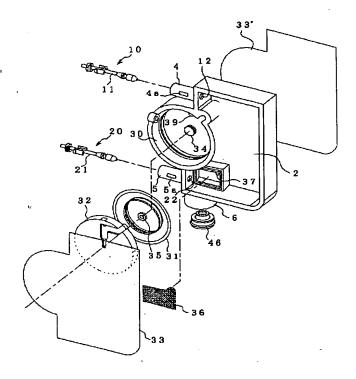
【図2】



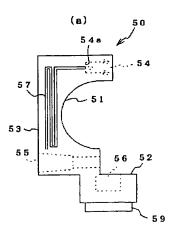
【図5】

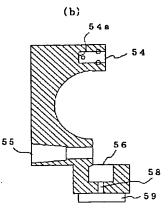






【図6】





【図4】

